

## *Testimony in Support of HB 6859 / SB 1177 / SB 1178 / SB 1180*

Dear Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee,

My name is Pastor Rodney Wade and I serve as the Senior Pastor of Long Hill Bible Church in Waterbury, CT and we fight for the dignity and equity of underserved and marginalized community members regardless race, sect, and immigration status. I also belong to Recovery For All – a statewide coalition fighting for a better future for Connecticut, bringing together more than 60 community, faith, and labor organizations. ***I am testifying in strong support of HB 6859 / SB 1177 / SB 1178 / SB 1180.***

As the wealthiest state in the country, Connecticut should be a shining example for the nation where every family has what we need to live a good life. But instead, we have a state where hundreds of thousands of working people are struggling to raise families, even while a handful of wealthy corporations and wealthy residents are getting even wealthier. Adding insult to injury, working people in Connecticut are also contributing a greater share of their income for the services we all rely on while the wealthiest fail to pay what they owe to state and local governments.

This isn't an accident. Decades of bad policy choices have made Connecticut ground zero for the most extreme racial, economic, and gender inequities in the country.

### **These bills will help protect workers!**

- [HB 6859](#) The Predictable Scheduling bill, Will benefit 250,000 shift workers in CT working in retail, hospitality, and food services.
- Will ensure that they have access to a stable job that respects them and their families and gives them a path to opportunity. I support this bill and you should too.
- [SB 1177](#) AN ACT CONCERNING ONE FAIR WAGE. After Emancipation, the restaurant industry sought to hire newly freed Black people without paying them, forcing them to live on tips. This concept was made law, excluding a workforce of mostly Black women from the full minimum wage. Today, Connecticut remains one of 43 states that permits this business model built on slavery and has allowed a workforce that is overwhelmingly women and disproportionately women of color to continue receiving a subminimum wage 150 years since Emancipation. There are approximately 70,000 tipped workers in Connecticut, 70% of whom are women. 38% are workers of color. Eliminating the subminimum wage will help eradicate systemic racism and gender inequity. Eliminating the subminimum wage would help ensure that all working people are paid a fair wage in CT. I support this bill and you should too.

- [SB 1178](#) AN ACT EXPANDING CONNECTICUT PAID SICK DAYS. Over 88% of workers in Connecticut are not guaranteed paid sick days under current law. Under Connecticut's existing law, eligible workers use paid sick days for their own or their child or spouse's illness, injury, or health condition; to seek preventive care or medical diagnosis, care, or treatment for their own or their child or spouse's mental or physical illness, injury or health condition; or receive assistance related to domestic or sexual violence. Legislation should require all employers, regardless of size or industry, to provide paid sick time to their employees. **Include all types of family structures and relationships** by aligning who a worker can use paid sick days to care for with Connecticut's paid family and medical leave law. This will allow workers to take paid sick days to care for a child of any age, as well as their chosen family.
- [SB 1180](#) AN ACT CONCERNING RIDESHARE AND DELIVERY DRIVER MINIMUM STANDARDS This bill would, for the first time in Connecticut:
  - Set **minimum pay standards** for rideshare and delivery drivers.
  - Require tech platforms to be **transparent** re: what they're charging and paying.
- Ensure Connecticut drivers are treated with **reciprocity** by neighboring states. Workers are being squeezed by rampant inflation and precarious working conditions. What was a promise of "worker autonomy" by many of the transportation network companies ("TNCs") has been revealed to be unstable earnings in disguise. With this bill, Connecticut can lead the wave in revealing the economic model of network companies, both ride-share and delivery companies, so that customers can make more conscious decisions and workers can understand how they are paid.

I urge the committee to support all of these bills. Please prioritize the rights of Connecticut workers and support these critical policies.

Thank you,

Pastor Rodney Wade

Waterbury, CT